AN ANALYSIS OF LOCAL WISDOM WITHIN MEDIA LITERACY

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Abstract

This research was conducted upon the ability of people living in Aceh, especially in the city of Langsa, to maintain and preserve local culture and wisdom in the modern era, when mass media massively infuses and affect the society. Local wisdom, as it protects people of bad impact from social media, may be developed as a literacy model for literacy education and literacy of media. This research aimed to analyze Acehnese local wisdom existing within people living in Langsa and to describe media literacy based on local wisdom. A qualitative approach was applied by means of ethnographic research. The data were collected using observation through relating documents. The data were analyzed through several stages: describing Acehnese local wisdom existing within media, classifying data, analyzing data, and describing media literacy model based on local wisdom. The result indicated that people living in Langsa was not able to actively utilized the local wisdom upon media. It occurred because they were just passive users of social media; there was also a lack of support from the government in educating people to be smart users. Then, the media literacy model utilizing local wisdom encompassed the ability to access, to analyze, to evaluate, and to produce the message.

Keywords: Local wisdom, media literacy, Acehnese people.

1. Introduction

Local wisdom refers to principles of life, which are passed through generations by the oral traditions, as in proverbs and fairy tale; it also existed throughout the written tradition, such as in ancient manuscripts. Local wisdom also exists in the form of the utensils used by people. The local wisdom was gained through experiences and experiments and then was implied within local culture and traditions.

Local wisdom of certain society is not merely applicable in the limited area, yet, it is also possible to be adopted by people living in the vast area; even it can be adopted as national local wisdom. The province of Aceh, which is inhabited by 4.5 millions of people, also possesses certain local wisdom. According to Majelis Adat Aceh (The Board of Acehnese Culture and Tradition), Aceh has very broad local wisdom encompassing broad aspects of

life including culture, politic, government, occupations, social and society, worship, economy, education, conservation of nature, and so on.

Aceh is rich in cultural potency; this area was famous for its glory in the past. For instance, within the occupation field, such as in farming, trading, and fishery, Aceh has certain local rules, which were established based on local sensibility and Islamic law (sharia). In the fishery, there was a local rule preventing people of sailing and catching fish on Friday. Such rule was established enabling people to perform weekly pray on Friday, especially for males. This rule is still maintained recently by Panglima Laot (Sea Commander) across the area of Aceh. Within the aspect of trading, Acehnese people also concern about the rule of trading, especially on the law of trading based on sharia. Thus, moneylending is strictly prohibited within the Acehnese monetary system.

Along time, literacy has a significant role in preserving and maintaining local wisdom. In short, literacy refers to the ability to retain information taken from the media. The abilities regarding it include reading, writing, and comprehending visual ideas. UNESCO defined literacy as the set of cognitive abilities relating to reading and writing. In fact, literacy had become a part of human's life since the prehistoric era.

Then, media literacy refers to the ability to access, to analyze, to evaluate, and to produce a message in the form of printed and non-printed media (Potter, 2004). In Indonesia, the literacy involving electronic media is regulated by Act No. 2 of 2002 about Broadcasting. This act specifically stated that every content broadcasted using radio spectrum must be useful and appropriate to people's needs.

Nowadays, media had a significant role in delivering information for people. The development of technology has both negative and positive impact on media. On the other hand, the existence of local wisdom also has an important role in maintaining and controlling the content of the media. Based on these ideas, it was significant to conduct research to describe Acehnese local wisdom existing within media and to define literacy model. Relating to it, this study was done to analyze Acehnese local wisdom existing within media and to describe appropriate literacy model based on local wisdom.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Local Wisdom

Sibarani (2012, p. 11) defined local wisdom as knowledge of native people, which had been passed for generations to control and manage the society. Jati (2011, p. 7) explained that local wisdom referred to cultural treasure containing wisdom and way of life.

In Indonesia, where many ethnics exist, local wisdom is applicable as trans-ethnical and trans-cultural wisdom. It means that the local wisdom of each ethnic has similarities, which are applicable nationwide. The local wisdom of ethics in Indonesia contains the value of helping each other, tolerance, working ethic, and so on. Such local wisdom is passed through generations by oral literature as in proverbs or folklore, as well as in ancient manuscripts. Sibarani (2012, p. 133) mentioned kinds of local wisdom: welfare, working ethic, discipline, education, health, communal work, gender management, maintaining culture, awareness of environment, peace, politeness, honesty, social solidarity, harmony and resolution of conflict, commitment, positive mindset, and gratitude.

Then, Sartini (2004, p. 18) explained the functions of local wisdom: natural conservation, developing human resources, developing knowledge and science, source of belief, literature, and prohibition, social integration, social ceremony, ethical and moral guidance, and political guidance.

As an instance of gender management, Acehnese tradition has two pieces of jewelry: *cupeng* and *boh dokma*. *Cupeng* is a golden cup used to cover the genital area of a baby girl. Then, *boh dokma* was a golden button with spike used in the area of the breast. Both traditional pieces of jewelry were actually a protection for an underage girl of perverted acts. Then, in Aceh, the differentiation of tombstone, queens' tombstones were made of white marble while the Kings' made of stone, indicated that female had a special position within society.

Furthermore, Yusuf (2008, p. 1) explained that Acehnese people possess local wisdom, which has been passed through generations. Such wisdom has potencies in solving social problems within society. The local wisdom exists and develops within society; it embeds and become the identity of Acehnese people. It also affects and be affected by language, religion, arts, education, technology, and so on.

2.2 Media Literacy

Media literacy refers to the ability to effectively and efficiently comprehend mass communication. In addition, Potter (2008) defined media literacy as a perspective tool to interpret and to anticipate the effect of information contained within the media. However, the simplest comprehension of media literacy was the ability to access, to analyze, to evaluate, and to communicate the message within media.

Act No. 32 of 2003 paragraph 4 mentioned that broadcasting referred to mass communication as media of information, education, and entertainment, which must be appropriate to people's need and condition. Then, media literacy is a way to employ the media in accordance with the social function of media. On the other hand, Iriantara (2009, p. 13) explained that education toward media literacy was a way to gain maximum benefit of media. It was done to protect, as well as to prepare, people as consumers of media. Potter (2008) explained seven skills in utilizing media: analyzing and interpreting the message, evaluating elements in media, classifying and categorizing contents, inducting and generalizing message, deducting, synthesizing content, and making abstract or brief essence of certain content.

Potter (2008) also explained that as higher the ability of media literacy, the higher meaning could be interpreted from media and vice versa. A person with low media literacy skills will have trouble in identifying inaccurate contents, controversies, appreciating satire, and so on. People with low media literacy skills will tend to accept any information without confirmation, which is dangerous in this modern era.

3. Research Method

This research was conducted as descriptive-qualitative research. Nawawi (in Siswantoro, 2007, p. 56) defined descriptive research as a research, which could describe and illustrate the condition of the research object. The data upon qualitative research appeared in the form of sentences and words that brought meaningful understanding toward the real condition.

In order to gain deep comprehension toward the position of local wisdom in the middle of mass media development in Aceh, the explorative study was applied. Mantra (2004) stated that an exploratory study focused on the perspectives and ideas. It was applied to discover the literacy model based on local wisdom in order to prevent the negative impact of social media on society. An ethnographic approach was applied to this research. As Pawito (2008, p. 149) said that ethnography closely related to culture. Thus, it was proper to be

applied in order to investigate the position of local wisdom toward the development of media.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Acehnese Local Values of Wisdom

Local wisdom was inherited by people; it contains values of virtue. Media, as a way of delivering information, may be employed to transfer local wisdom toward society. The result from the identification process upon local wisdom was shown in the following table.

Table 1. The identification process upon local wisdom.

Local Sensibility	Values
Meulaot refers to fishery	Work ethic
Khanduri Laot refers to a feast as a form of gratitude performed before going to sail.	Gratitude
Uroe Pantang Laot refers to forbidden days of going to sail.	Commitment, Preserving nature
Tarek Pukat refers to the activity of hand trawling.	Work ethic, Commitment
Meukat refers to trading	Welfare
Jak u Blang refers to the activity of cultivating rice field	Work ethic
Khanduri Blang refers to a feast as a form of gratitude performed in the area of rice field.	Gratitude
Meugang refers to slaughtering cattle a day before Ramadhan, Idul Adha, and Idul Fitri	Gratitude
Catur Aceh refers to Acehnese chess	Preserving culture and Creativity
Seumapa refers to the competition of pronouncing proverb on the wedding ceremony; the delegation of bride and groom were competed in pronouncing proverb	Preserving culture and Creativity
Neurajah refers to the activity of casting a spell for healing	Health
Keude Kupi refers to a coffee shop	Social solidarity
Molod refers to the commemoration of the prophet's birthday	Gratitude
Reusam refers to social agreement	Commitment
Peuayon Aneuk refers to rock-a-bye a baby while singing a song about the prophet (*salawat*) or praying.	Education
Hadih maja refers to the oral proverb, folklore, manuscript, and utensils.	Education
Seulaweut refers to songs praising the prophet	Education
Do da Idi refers to lullaby songs	Education
Qanun refers to regulations	Commitment
Dayah refers to Acehnese traditional Islamic boarding school	Education, politeness
Meurukon refers to traditional debating	Education
Meudikee refers to the chanting of the name of God	Education
Muzakarah refers to the deliberation of Acehnese Islamic scholars	Communal work, Harmony and Conflict Resolution
Tueng Dara Baro refers to the wedding party on the resident of the bride	Politeness, Commitment
Intat Linto refers to the activity of escorting the groom to the bride's resident	Politeness, Commitment
Cah Ret refers to the activity of matching couple and proposing the bride	Politeness, Commitment
Ranub Kong Haba refers to the activity of formal proposing, which dowry is defined as well as determining the date of marriage	Politeness, Commitment
Cupeng is a kind of jewelry as a cover of girl's genitalia	Respect toward female
Boh Dokma is a golden button with a spike, which was used on the breast of a female. It also became the self-defense weapon protecting female of perverted action	Respect toward female
Peusijik is an activity of traditional blessing	Harmony, Conflict Resolutions

Rumoh Panggong is Acehnese traditional stilts house	Working Ethics, Welfare, Environment
Tuha Peut refers to the board of representatives in a village	Commitment, Harmony, and Conflict Resolution
Tuha Lapan refers to the board of representatives in a subdistrict	Commitment, Harmony, and Conflict Resolution
Geuchik is a chief of a village	Commitment, Harmony, and Conflict Resolution
Teungku Imum is a leader of the religious affair in the community	Commitment, Harmony, and Conflict Resolution

The data detailing local sensibility and wisdom above are examples of several values of Acehnese local wisdom that are still being implemented. The dissemination of its information can also still be found within the media in Aceh. The local wisdom in Aceh is a manifestation of the local culture belongs to Acehnese people. It can be applied as the basis for living in a community and everyday life. It can also be executed as a filter toward the changes of the era, including in facing with the exposure of mass media. According to La Piere (in Fitryarini, et al., 2014), the central environments, such as home, family or friendship network, tend to influence the values, attitude, and behavior of individuals than the media. One does not easily change his beliefs because of the information exposed by the distant media. It is due to its trust in his close social group. New media messages will be accepted if those are in accordance with the social environment. However, from the perspectives of values of Acehnese local wisdom, media have an important role in distributing information on activities or news containing local culture or wisdom in Aceh. Some institutions even socialize those events through media by utilizing the values of Acehnese local wisdom in order to educate the Acehnese younger generation, to dispel the drug addiction in Aceh, for instance. Therefore, the values of religious education related to that issue are necessary to be employed.

4.2 The Media Literacy Based on Acehnese Local Wisdom

Media literacy is the ability to access, to analyze, to evaluate, and to communicate the contents of media messages. Its key focus is also related to the contents. Hence, all forms of information conveyed in the media must benefit the public. The followings are the discussion on the Acehnese local wisdom-based media literacy, which refers to the conventional media literacy theory of Livingstone.

4.2.1 Access

The first stage, access, is the ability of media users to search, to obtain and to gather information. The literacy skills (development of understanding) by the users are begun to take place after the process of access is applied. However, the problem is the gap that continuously occurs when accessing online knowledge, communication and participation. Based on the result of observation, the Acehnese people living in urban areas have been able to access various media such as printed, electronic and digital media. In addition, the Acehnese people who live in coastal and suburban areas have also been able to access media; particularly printed and electronic media, yet, the access of digital media depending on the age of the users. The younger age of the users, the easier they carry out the first stage of media literacy.

Moreover, based on the observation, a number of access to printed media were done by middle-aged people who did it at *keude kupi* (coffee shop) while exchanging information with other people. Most coffee shops in Aceh also have television, so the people do not access information through printed media only. The Acehnese people commonly discuss

information received from the media in a coffee shop. For that reason, not only coffee shops in Aceh serve as a place to drink coffee or hang out, but those also turn into a place to access information through printed media, television, and informational discussion between other people. This also results that they do not directly receive certain information published by the media. Modern coffee shops in Aceh are normally equipped with Wi-Fi, making the people easier to reach information access via digital access. Both traditional and modern coffee shop users usually express their thoughts and ideas after obtaining information. Therefore, coffee shops can be included in the Acehnese local wisdom, which also serves as a means of exchanging information among its users.

4.2.2 Analysis

The second stage, analysis, relates to the ability to search, change and choose information tailored to individual needs. The Uses and Gratification theory promotes that people actively look for certain media and content to produce particular satisfaction or result.

Based on the result of observation, several middle-aged informants admitted that they concerned about the impact of the media on the younger generations. The impact was the lack of ability to filter information or inappropriate spectacle shown for a certain age, making them behave poorly. One of the informants also disclosed that he often asked his children to turn off the television when some channels presented uneducated broadcasts. On the contrary, three teenage informants stated that parents nowadays had a lack of ability to analyze information from the media. As a result, the information was easily accepted, specifically in terms of politics. Thus, sometimes, debates were happened because of different opinions in receiving information.

Local wisdom guided by Acehnese people and related to the ability to analyze the media is the values of religious education. They believe that they can only distinguish between the *haq* (good) and *bathil* (bad) through Quran and Hadith. Therefore, Acehnese people frequently put their children in *Dayah* (traditional Islamic school). In Aceh, the Islamic discussions are also disseminated through the printed media and special radio for the *Dayah* channel. In fact, it has also begun to spread to digital media. Accordingly, the local wisdom through Islamic education in Aceh is aimed at all ages.

4.2.3 Evaluation

Evaluation becomes the third stage, which is about the ability to connect media messages received with experiences. It includes evaluating information based on several criteria such as the truth, honesty and the interests of the message source. Thus, by evaluating the message, the communities can realize that they still have prerogative rights in interpreting media messages for themselves.

Based on the result of observation, two informants admitted that they were able to evaluate messages based on the aforementioned criteria. Meanwhile, three informants were hesitant and five informants revealed that they had not been able to evaluate the messages from the media. According to those informants, the result was happened because of the lack of objective information provided by the current media. As a result, this led to submission in evaluating the messages without comparing them from other sources first. The local wisdom practiced by the Acehnese people in evaluating the messages received, nevertheless, goes back to the values of religious education. Although many things trigger various opinions, in Aceh, there is a place to discuss those in deliberation. One that can be found is the deliberation held by the Acehnese ulama (Islamic scholars). Several Acehnese ulama discuss certain issues in Aceh and its result will be forwarded to the Aceh Government.

4.2.4 Content Creation

The final stage of media literacy is content creation. Creating messages is the ability of an individual to draft communication or ideas in the forms of words, sounds or images effectively in line with the rules of communication science. Creating media is related to the production and distribution of media content. It is also connected to the communicative competence. In Aceh, there are local television, printed, online, and radio. The contents of those media are usually in the form of information describing regions and cultures in Aceh. Nonetheless, based on the observation, those media are not so popular for all Acehnese people. Middle-aged informants specified that they preferred local printed media than local television, while some teenagers preferred to see online social media to keep up with information. If it is viewed from its function, the media in Aceh have carried out its role as a media offering information, entertainment, and the social and cultural values.

Based on the result of the observation that referred to the stages of media literacy-access, analysis, evaluation, and content creation — the Acehnese people were still unable to analyze and evaluate information from the media. However, through its local wisdom values, the negative effect exposed by the mass media could still be minimized so that the developing culture within the communities were still categorized into the local culture and those were not concerned into media culture. Yet, this local culture still has to be popularized back to the younger generation to value their own culture so those will not be omitted by the globalization era. Furthermore, the socialization or education related to the prominence of media literacy in Aceh is essential for all parties. That activity can improve the analyzing and evaluating information obtained.

5. Conclusions

By conducting this research, it could be concluded that the values of local wisdom within the Acehnese people are still maintained until now even though its application is still limited in urban areas. In the stage of accessing information from the media, the Acehnese people had no difficulties. However, based on the result of the observation, several informants admitted that they found troubles to analyze and evaluate information from the media. In addition, the values of Acehnese local wisdom through Islamic education play a vital role to filter all the adverse effects originating from the media. Moreover, the local wisdom-based literacy model implemented had three forms. First, the message production, which was applied by broadcasting local cultural shows on local televisions and podcasting the religious and cultural education through a local radio channel, was implemented. Then, there was watching restrictions performed by parents to their children by skipping inappropriate shows. The third form was conducted by designing and holding cultural events, festivals or activities that were informed through the media.

Based on the research result, it is suggested that the Government should engage in media literacy education to the Acehnese people. The authority also should maximize the Acehnese local wisdom in media literacy. By doing so, there will be a balance between advancing the Acehnese people who experience media literacy and preserving the values of Acehnese local wisdom.

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